

THE JACOBS REPORT

GILDA Z. JACOBS
MICHIGAN SENATE
Assistant Democratic Floor Leader
FOURTEENTH DISTRICT

For Immediate Release
January 20, 2006

Contact: Matt Levin
(517) 373-7888

HIGH SCHOOL PLAN SEES WARMER RECEPTION IN SENATE

New Curriculum Standards on the Way

In contrast to the House of Representatives, which raised various concerns over the required content in Superintendent of Public Instruction Mike Flanagan's new curriculum plan, the Senate Education Committee's hearing revolved around ensuring that schools have enough time and enough teachers to meet the requirements.

Committee Chair Sen. Wayne Kuipers (R-Holland) expressed no objections to the proposal and plans to hold a growing series of public hearings around the state to gather more input on the plan.

Democrats have expressed concern that the hearing schedule does not include dates in Wayne nor Oakland Counties, the two most populous jurisdictions in the state. The current hearing schedule is as follows:

3 p.m. Monday, January 30 at the Muskegon Intermediate School District, 630 Harvey St., Muskegon;

7 p.m. Thursday, February 9 at the Kent County Intermediate School District, 1655 E. Beltline NE, Grand Rapids;

4:30 p.m. Thursday, February 16 at the Midland County Educational Service Agency, 3917 Jefferson, Midland;

10:30 a.m. Monday, February 20 at the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency, 1819 E. Millham Rd., Kalamazoo;

10 a.m. Friday, March 3 at the Macomb Intermediate School District, 44001 Garfield Rd., Clinton Township;

3 p.m. Friday, March 3 at the Port Huron High School, 2215 Court St., Port Huron.

Thursday's testimony helped iron out some implementation wrinkles. For example, the plan as drafted would prevent one Ann Arbor student from participating in her dance curriculum. In particular, the requirement for a mathematics course during the senior year would have interfered with her early enrollment in college.

Senator Kuipers welcomed such testimony, hoping to push out some of the bugs in the initial proposal.

Committee members have not expressed any objections to the new credit requirements, which would require four years of math, including through algebra II; four years of English; three years of science; three years of social science; two years of foreign language; one year of health and physical education; and one year of art.

“I think you have here a committee that recognizes the value of a well-rounded education,” Senator Kuipers said.

Local school officials also appear supportive of the change, expressing concerns limited implementation methods and drop-out rates.

GRANHOLM: PREVENT PRIVACY INVASIONS

Legislation to Prevent Unauthorized Sale, Release of Telephone Records

Governor Granholm called upon the Michigan Legislature to enact new criminal laws prohibiting the unauthorized sale or release of telephone records and other personal information by telecommunications service providers and information brokers. Granholm also asked the Michigan Public Service Commission to investigate whether telecommunications service providers in Michigan have permitted the unauthorized release of telephone records.

“Unauthorized use of phone records violates a person’s privacy and creates serious threats to public safety,” Granholm said. “The state of Michigan must send a clear message that the private, personal information of Michigan consumers is not a commodity and is not for sale.”

Within the last two weeks, members of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and attorneys general in several states have called for swift action to prohibit the sale of private phone records and initiated investigations into several websites offering to sell phone records for around \$100. The Electronic Privacy Information Center has filed with the FCC a list of 40 websites that offer phone records for sale. Investigators already have determined that a corporate officer of one of the websites is a convicted felon.

“It is outrageous that anyone with an Internet connection can buy this private information,” Granholm said. “Unfortunately, that includes criminals who might be looking for records of law enforcement officials and others who would use the information for illegal or inappropriate purposes. This must be stopped.”

Granholm indicated that the Department of State Police has already warned law enforcement officers throughout the state that their cellular phone records may be available for purchase on the Internet.

Legislation proposed by Granholm, applicable to both cellular and land line providers, would:

- prohibit a telecommunications service provider from releasing or selling customer information without the consent of the customer;
- make it a crime to obtain customer information from a telecommunications service provider by providing false information or false pretenses;
- criminalize the unauthorized sale or release by brokers of telecommunications service account records, identifying information, or personal data relating to Michigan residents or businesses; and
- require telecommunications service providers to maintain appropriate measures to safeguard consumer privacy and notify consumers of any security breaches or unauthorized release of information.

In addition to the call for legislation, Governor Granholm has also asked the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) to identify how information brokers on the Internet are accessing consumer records. MPSC Chair J. Peter Lark expressed his concern about the apparent infringement of individual privacy rights and urges quick legislative action saying, “We’ll be looking at how these websites are getting this information and whether Michigan telecommunications providers have improperly released sensitive personal information about their customers without permission.”

Granholm’s proposal has been submitted to the Legislative Service Bureau for introduction in the House of Representative and the Senate.

TRANSMISSION AND PREVENTION OF INFLUENZA

From the Michigan Department of Community Health

Influenza viruses are spread when a person who has influenza coughs, sneezes, or speaks, releasing viruses into the air and other people inhale the viruses. When these viruses enter the nose, throat, or lungs of a person, they begin to multiply, causing disease. The viruses can also be spread when a person touches a surface with flu viruses on it (for example, a door handle) and then touches his or her nose or mouth.

A person who has the flu can spread viruses - that means they are contagious. Adults may be contagious from 1 day before feeling sick to up to 7 days after getting sick. Children can be contagious for longer than 7 days.

Preventing Influenza

- **Vaccination:** The single best way to prevent influenza is to get vaccinated in October or November every year. If, however, vaccine is unavailable, there are other ways to protect against flu (see Other Habits for Good Health, below).
- **Antiviral Medications:** Four antiviral drugs (amantadine, rimantadine, zanamivir, and oseltamivir) can be used to prevent influenza. All of these medications are prescription drugs, and a doctor must be consulted before using them.

Other Habits for Good Health: These steps can help prevent influenza and other illnesses:

- Avoid close contact
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too.
- Clean your hands
 - Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. You can also use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick
 - If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- Cover your mouth and nose
 - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

All Michigan legislation can be tracked at <http://www.legislature.michigan.gov/> .

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State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14th Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

Constituents of the 14th District may contact Senator Jacobs at sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.

This newsletter is produced in single-space form in order to save paper and transmission costs.

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Matthew J. Levin
Legislative Director
Senator Gilda Z. Jacobs
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

(517) 373-7888

mlevin@senate.michigan.gov